

To whom it may concern

Regarding House Bill 6645, AN ACT CONCERNING COMPASSIONATE AID IN DYING FOR TERMINALLY ILL PATIENTS, I would like to express my support. I am a critical care RN of 27 years and have personally witnessed the intense suffering many terminally ill patients go through in their last weeks or months of life. I have had patients plead with me to end their lives but remain silent when families are present for fear of upsetting them. I believe it is a very personal choice and I know that I myself would welcome relief should I ever be in the situation where I knew my life was near the end. Most people in today's hospital atmosphere where litigation rules actions in most cases, do not die a dignified death. They suffer right up until their last breath, pain med often not being administered adequately for fear of killing them. We often have someone seen by a psychiatrist who is expressing these wishes while in the hospital. The psychiatrist deems them incompetent because their "depression is clouding their thoughts and they therefore can't make a rational decision." We then proceed to treat them as we deem what is best for them. Watching someone die a prolonged agonizing death is a great cause of burn out among critical care nurses as well. I would rather give compassionate care near the end of life rather than be forced to perform procedures ,etc that are obviously too unbearable for the patient. If someone is competent to make that decision then they should be able to make it. I see nothing wrong with assisting someone who has no further treatment options available or who chooses not to pursue those options that would only prolong their life in an undignified manner. I therefore encourage you to pass this bill.

Sincerely,

Jeannie Ranalli RN, CCRN